SYA4941 Internship in Community Social Services
Supervised by Dr. White

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Description

The internship is an excellent opportunity to engage in experiential learning. Your experience will depend on the circumstances of your internship setting, but it will also be largely influenced by your own effort. Your effort during your internship as well as your effort in reflecting on your experiences will contribute to enriching your experience and turning your internship into an engaging intellectual experience with lasting consequences for your interests. This is an excellent opportunity to take charge of your learning. Make the most of it!

Meeting Times

We will meet at least four times over the semester to discuss your internship experiences. Our first meeting will be sometime during the first week of classes. Please arrange to come to my office hours during that first week. We will meet again approximately one month later, a month before the semester ends and then during the last week of classes or exam week. You will be responsible for scheduling these meetings with me in advance during the week prior to meeting. Meetings will last 20-30 minutes.

Requirements

There are six internship requirements:

1. Satisfy your time commitment for the internship (120 hours) and your internship supervisor. It is important that you represent the University of Florida in an excellent manner by not only making a substantial contribution to your internship agency but also demonstrating your reliability. Show up on time and leave on time and fulfill all your commitments in the internship. Shirking this essential responsibility reflects poorly on the Sociology Department, your faculty internship advisor and the University of Florida. It may also jeopardize the opportunities of future sociology students to intern at your internship site. At the end of the semester, please obtain a signed letter from your internship site supervisor verifying that you have completed your minimum time commitment and submit this to me.

2. Complete your Internship Expectations Essay (described below).

3. Identify readings (with the guidance of your faculty internship advisor) for a semester syllabus and complete them during the course of the semester.

4. Complete weekly entries in a journal (described below).

5. Meet with me four or more times.

6. Complete a final essay in which you reflect on the content of your expectations essay, discussing how your experiences met or departed from your initial expectations.

Readings

Prior to our first meeting, you will identify a list of readings that are relevant to your interests in your internship. These readings may be published papers of research results, policy papers, book length studies or textbook chapters. The readings can come from any field. There should be at least one reading per week for the duration of the semester (16 total). Should you wish, I can help you select the readings. You should aim to complete your syllabus as scheduled, although you are of course free to change the readings at any time if your experiences and interests lead you in an unexpected direction.
Internship Journal

Your internship journal is the primary product of your internship. The journal is an electronic document with periodic entries which detail your experiences.

The first entry will be your Expectations Essay. This essay describes in detail your expectations for your internship. These include your expectations for your activities, on-the-job challenges and learning objectives. Your learning objectives are a list of at least five questions about which you hope to gain insight during the semester. These questions should be closely tied to your selected readings. You will complete your Expectations Essay and email it to me prior to our first meeting of the semester.

Subsequent journal entries will occur at least weekly. Each entry has two components. First, you will describe your experiences since the last journal entry and discuss these experiences in reference to your expectations as you described them in your Expectations Essay. Second, you will reflect upon your experiences in reference to your weekly readings. Your reflections should refer to specific aspects of your readings and demonstrate that you have completed the readings. You will email me your journal prior to all of our meetings.

Your final essay should reflect on how your experiences fulfilled or failed to meet the expectations that you detailed in your initial expectations essay. You should also detail at least two major lessons that you’ve learned from your internship and how you think these lessons will influence your future career choices.

The Experience

The design of this type of internship aims to give you ample opportunity for thoughtful experiential learning. Your experience will largely depend on your effort and the time that you devote for reflection in your journal. I can help guide the process, but ultimately, this is your chance to explore how your own effort and ideas can lead your intellectual development. I look forward to sharing your journey!